Organizing Slovene Medical Bibliography on the World Wide Web

Dimitar Hristovski, M.Sc., Anamarija Rožić-Hristovski, M.D., M.Sc.
Institute of Biomedical Informatics, Medical Faculty, University of Ljubljana
Vrazov trg 2/2, 1105 Ljubljana, Slovenia

Background. The Institute of Biomedical Informatics (IBMI) started to create the Slovene medical bibliography *Biomedicina Slovenica* (BS) twenty years ago using MEDLARS standards and MESH thesaurus as an indexing tool. BS indexes Slovene authors' articles published home and abroad. It also includes journals, monographs and proceedings published in Slovenia. BS covers biomedicine, dentistry, veterinary medicine and adequate life sciences. BS is important for information retrieval, particularly for specific topics e.g. considering national epidemiology or health planning and personal and institutional bibliographies. In the last two years BS has served as the basis of a decision support system for biomedical research evaluation. The evaluation is usually needed either for individual scientist or for a research group and for different purposes e.g. for research project approval, for academic career, for different awards etc.[1] BS has many functions of national importance so we decided to enable our users easier and more user friendly access to BS by making it available on the WWW.

System. BS is stored on a Oracle7 relational database management system. The programs needed for data entry and searching, as well as the necessary reports were developed in a client-server manner using Oracle Developer/2000 set of tools. The programs are quite complex and offer a rich set of search capabilities. They are used by the staff of the IBMI to maintain BS. However we found some drawbacks when we considered making these programs accessible to the general medical community. In order to make BS accessible to a large number of users in an inexpensive and easy to use way, we decided to make it available on the WWW. Typically the WWW pages are static and are created by hand. Static pages were not suitable for our purpose because we wanted to allow the user to formulate a search request and get a dynamic WWW page as a result. We achieved this by developing our own programs. BS on WWW can be accessed from the Biomedicina Slovenica on WWW home page *http://www.mf.uni-lj.si/bs/bs_start.html*. Searching BS on WWW is very easy if the user has a browser, which is capable of working with frames. In that case the browser window is divided into three parts (frames): In the upper frame we can enter the search request, in the lower left frame we get brief search results or help for searching BS and in the lower right part we get a full bibliographic record.

Evaluation. Six months after BS is accessible on WWW we noticed a great interest among the Slovene biomedical community. The users accessed BS home page 1509 times and they performed 2746 searches.

Conclusions. Because BS serves as the base for a decision support system for research activities evaluation and sometimes for tenure and promotion, the users are interested in completing their bibliographies in BS. Now they check their references regularly themselves on WWW and inform IBMI about mistakes and missing publications. As BS gains popularity, the Slovene journals publishers and congress organisers are more interested to index Slovene biomedical literature in BS than before. Including URL in documents enables presentation of full-text on WWW. At the moment three Slovene journals have started to go completely online. IBMI endeavours to include the more URLs and make possible links from BS to complete documents.

References

1. Hristovski D, Rožić-Hristovski A, Adamič Š. A decision support system for biomedical research evaluation. In: Brender J, Christensen JP, Scherrer J-R et al, editors. MIE 96. Medcial informatics Europs '96. Human facets in information technologies. Amsterdam: IOS Press, 1996:609-13.